Bundy's executioner known but to warden

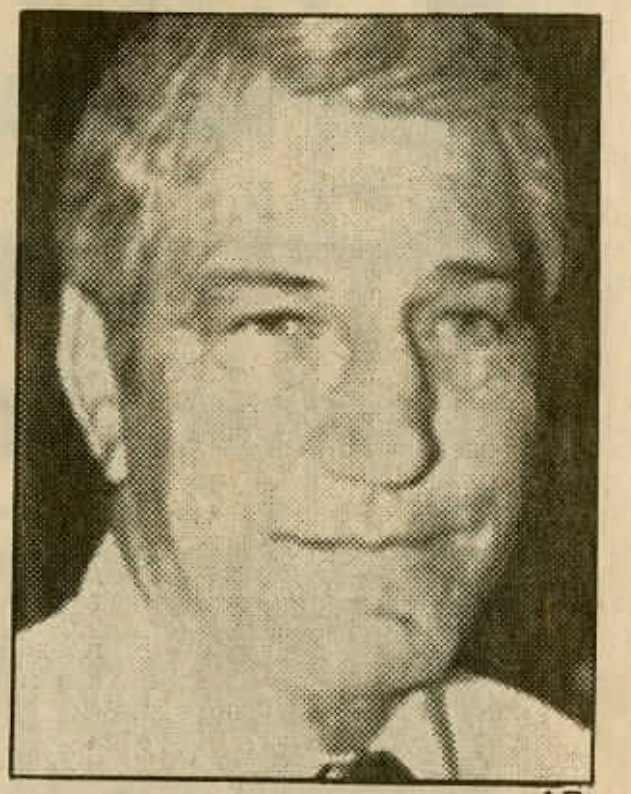
When it comes to death row, Florida State Prison superintendent **Thomas Barton** has a simple task: Keep the identity of hooded executioners a secret.

It's done for safety.

"I don't know how many kooks would harass them," said Barton, 52, who has run the prison since December 1986.

He began as a corrections officer there in 1961.

Only he knows who activated the machine that sent 3,000 volts and 20 amps of electricity through the chair and into the body of serial killer **Ted Bundy** Tuesday morning. The person assigned to Bundy — as in all executions — was a private citizen paid $150 and given a chauffeured escort to and from the Starke facility at a secret time.



AP

BARTON: He keeps the list in his head.

Barton handles all arrangements and he signals the executioner. Executioners are chosen from a list of volunteers sought by the state soon after the death penalty was reinstated in Florida in 1976.

Barton won't say whether there's a file labeled "executioners" at the prison.

"The names aren't written down. (The list) is in my head."

Barton says he doesn't mind the skulduggery.

"It's no more a burden than it is to protect the inmates." He has picked two people to handle executions on Feb. 1.

— **J. Frazier Smith**